

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing replaces all prior versions and listing of the claims in this application:

Claim 1-12 (Canceled by this amendment).

Claim 13 (new).      An apparatus for holding a surgical instrument relative to a base, which comprises:

        a mounting portion having a first section and a second section, at least one of the sections being movable relative to the other of the sections to selectively engage a portion of the base;

        a jaw assembly having first and second jaw members which define a retaining area therebetween which is configured and dimensioned to receive a shaft of the surgical instrument;

        at least one of the mounting portion and the jaw assembly including a spring for biasing at least one of the mounting portion and the jaw assembly in a predetermined position to facilitate engagement of the mounting portion with the base or engagement of the jaw assembly with the shaft of the surgical instrument, respectively; and

        the jaw assembly including a spring for biasing one of the first and second jaw members into an open position to facilitate positioning of the shaft of the surgical instrument in the retaining area.